

CambsQuality®

CambsQuality Ltd. St. John's Innovation Centre, Cowley Road, Cambridge, CB4 0WS, U.K. Reg. No. 5122980
Tel. 0800 013 0623 UK or +44 1480 392023 overseas
Fax. +44 (0) 8701 372532 Email info@cambsquality.com www.cambsquality.com

ISO 9000:2000

1. Introduction

The ISO 9000 standards are a set of international management standards and guidelines. First published in 1987, they have earned a mixed reputation.

Many organisations, including those who introduced the standard under the guidance of the author¹, reported substantial improvements in quality and efficiency. Others complained of the reverse and that they now had to deal with mountains of paperwork and red tape!

2. Reasons for the Differences

A survey at a recent BSI forum revealed one probable reason. Most of those present had implemented ISO 9000:1994 by basing their Organisation Management System (OMS) around the clauses of the standard! A small minority, including the author, took organisation's existing procedures, compared them with the requirements of the standard and introduced new or enhanced ones as necessary.

(You will note the phrase **Organisation** Management System, not **Quality** Management System, as used in ISO 9000:2000 and its predecessors. This is an area where I believe those preparing ISO 9000:2000 have erred. The phrase **Quality** Management System is divisive as it implies that this is something separate from the organisation).

3. Effect of the Changes

The revised standards are intended to guide organisations to base their OMS on the way that they really operate, as has always been the policy at CambsQuality. To obtain ISO 9000:2000 registration, organisations have to understand their core processes, for example, how raw materials become finished goods. This reflects good modern management practice but it remains to be seen whether this laudable intention is translated into action or whether organisations will now try to document their OMS's around the clauses of ISO 9001:2000.

4. Overview of the Changes

The 1994 ISO 9000 family contained a confusing proliferation of standards and documents. These have been replaced by four primary standards:

ISO 9000: Quality Management Systems Fundamentals and Vocabulary

ISO 9001: Quality Management Systems - Requirements

ISO 9004: Quality Management Systems Guidance for Performance Improvement

ISO 19011: Guidelines on Quality and Environmental Auditing

ISO 9001 addresses the OMS requirements for an organisation to meet its customer needs. ISO 9004 goes beyond ISO 9001 towards business excellence.

Both standards use the common vocabulary defined in ISO 9000:2000, which also describes the underlying fundamentals.

The new revisions have:

- Increased focus on top management commitment

- Increased focus on customer satisfaction

- Emphasis on processes within the organisation

- The introduction of continual improvement concepts

- A more logical sequence of requirements and guidelines

- Changes in terminology, particularly the use of the term **Organisation** instead of **Supplier** and the use of the term **Supplier** instead of **Subcontractor**. These changes have been made to match the normal use and meaning of these words

- The requirements for documented procedures have been reduced with the emphasis placed on the organisation demonstrating effective operation

5. The Eight Quality Management Principles of ISO 9000:2000

The revisions of ISO 9001 and 9004 are based on eight quality management principles that reflect best management practices:

- Customer focused organisation

- Leadership

- Involvement of people

- Process approach

- System approach to management

- Continual improvement

- Factual approach to decision making

- Mutually beneficial supplier relationship

They replace the twenty-six clauses of ISO 9001:1994.

6. ISO 9004:2000

ISO 9004:1994 detailed guidelines for interpreting ISO 9001:1994. ISO 9004:2000 is an entirely new standard representing best business practice and has much in common with Investors in People, the European Quality Model and with various other Business Excellence Models that have been used successfully by some of the world's most profitable companies.

Organisations cannot be registered to ISO 9004:2000.

7. Organisations Registered to ISO 9002 and 9003

Organisations currently registered to ISO 9002 and ISO 9003 should be encouraged to move towards registration to ISO 9001:2000. This will be much less painful than they may think. Some clauses of ISO 9001:2000 may not relate to an organisation's processes, for example those covering design. Under these circumstances ISO 9001:2000 registration may be achieved provided that the organisation can show that excluding cover for these clauses does not effect its ability to fulfil its customer and regulatory requirements.

8. In Conclusion

The introduction of the ISO 9000:2000 standards presents an opportunity. If taken this will lead to improved efficiency, improved quality of product and service and an improved bottom line.

It also presents an opportunity to repeat the mistakes of the past with the reverse results.

¹ ISO 9001 and TickIT at Primagraphics, Quality World Technical Supplement, September 1994.

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